[TFR 250-1]

THE WAR IN KOREA 1950-1953

COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTS

ANNOTATION

The present work contains archival documents illuminating various aspects of the military cooperation between the Soviet Union and North Korea Until recently, the majority of the documents were under closed storage and not accessible to researchers This collection contains documents on the delivery of arms and combat equipment to North Korea, documents on Soviet military specialists being sent to Korea, documents on Soviet servicemembers' participation in combat operations, and other materials which permit the composition of a sufficiently complete picture of the events that took place

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SOVIET FLIERS IN THE KOREAN SKY

27 July 1993 marked the 40th anniversary of the end of the Korean War Formally, the war, which lasted more than three years, was waged between North and South Korea, but in actuality the countries of Asia, Africa, Europe, North and South America were drawn into the sphere of combat operations As of 20 December 1951, a distribution of forces numbering 624,140 persons opposed the Korean Peoples' Army this included servicemembers of South Korea - 354,020, the U S - 220,670, England - 19,800, Turkey - 9,000, Canada - 7,900, France - 1,100, Australia - 1,100, the Philippines - 1,100, Holland - 1,200, Greece - 1,000, New Zealand - 800, Belgium - 700, Luxembourg - 850, Ethiopia - 800, Portugal - 1,000, Denmark - 900, Thailand - 1,200, Columbia - 1,100 The South Korean Army was technically well equipped and had in its armament 1,595 aircraft (1,570 American and 25 English), 1,256 tanks (980 American, 124 English and 152 South Korean of American manufacture), six hundred eighty-seven 105 and 155 mm howitzers (500 American, 33 English and 154 South Korean), and also three thousand five hundred 90 mm recoilless guns

The number of personnel in the Korean People's Army was approximately the same as in the South Korean [Army] and reached 394,118 persons by the end of the war Units of the Chinese People's Volunteers fought on the side of North Korea Soviet aviation, in the form of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps (FAC), provided cover for the [North Korean] troops from the air

The 64th FAC operations group was created by order No 5564 dated 15 November 1950 of the Soviet Army Chief of the General Staff in the period from 15 through 24 November 1950 on the territory of the People's Republic of China Three fighter aviation divisions (FAD) -- the 28th FAD (28th, 72nd and 139th Fighter Aviation Regiments - FAR), the 50th FAD (29th and 177th FAR), the 151st FAD (28th and 72nd FAR) -- arrived between 20 and 26 November 1950 and formed the basis for the Corps The three divisions contained 844 officers, 1153 sergeants and 1274 soldiers[1] Headquarters for the Aviation Corps were located in the city of Mukden and the air formations were deployed at airfields in the Chinese cities of Mukden [Shenyang], Anshan and Antung

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The Corps order of battle did not remain constant during wartime operations [The order of battle] changed periodically and was mainly composed of two to three FADs [Fighter Air Divisions], one independent night FAR [Fighter Air Regiments], two anti-aircraft artillery divisions, one anti-aircraft searchlight regiment, and one air technical division Rotation of units and formations was carried out in accordance with directives of the USSR Ministry of Defense after an eight-to-fourteen-month stay in the theater of operations For the entire period of official government duty in the corps, [the units] rotated were 12 fighter divisions (the 28th, 151st, 50th, 303rd, 324th, 97th, 190th, 32nd, 216th, 133rd, 37th, 100th FAD), two independent night fighter regiments (the 35st and 258th FAR), two naval fighter regiments (578th and 781st FAR), four anti-aircraft artillery divisions (the 87th, 92nd, 28th and 35th AAD), two air technical divisions (the 18th and 16th ATD) and other support units The Corps combat composition for various periods of combat operations are shown in table No 1

The 64th Corps took part in combat operations from November 1950 through June 1953 During that time, [the corps] fulfilled its mission of providing cover for key industrial/administrative centers of northeastern China in the direction of Mukden [These centers] include the Supun GES [hydroelectric station], the railway bridge across the Yalutszyan River near Antung, and North Korean lines of communication up to the line Pyongyang-Genzan (to a depth of 75 kilometers)

At the airfields where they were based, the Soviet command organized an operational readiness for covering the protected regions The fliers were on duty in a state of heightened combat readiness Under the hot and humid climatic conditions this was not easily accomplished On the ground, the humid air would heat up to 40-45 degrees, but at high altitudes the temperature in the plane's cabin would sharply drop to five or six degrees Duty flights to intercept and repulse enemy aviation took place based on data from radio-technical stations Only in rare instances did flights provide cover for objects on a search and destroy basis

Soviet pilots protected the sky over North Korea in close cooperation with fliers of the Chinese and KNDR air forces It is true that Chinese aviation had only just begun conducting combat operations in December 1951 with two divisions, they brought another three divisions into operation in March and two in May 1952 The Korean Air Force entered

64TH FIGHTER AVIATION CORPS AIR ORDER OF BATTLE

Table No 1

Unit	Corps Service Dates
28th, 50th, 151st FAD	Nov 1950 - Mar 1951
303rd, 324th FAD	Mar 1951 - Feb 1952
97th, 190th FAD	Jan 1952 - Aug 1952
32nd, 133rd, 216th FAD	Jul 1952 - Aug 1953
37th, 100th FAD	Jul 1953 - Dec 1954
351st Night FAR	Mar 1951 - Jan 1953
578th Naval FAR (as part of the 133rd FAD)	Jul 1952 - Apr 1953
298th Night FAR	Jan 1953 - Jul 1954
781st Naval FAR	Jan 1953 - Jul 1953
87th, 92nd AAD	Mar 1951 - Jan 1953
28th, 35th AAD	Jan 1953 - Nov 1954
10th Anti-Aircraft Searchlight Regiment	Mar 1951 - Jan 1953
20th Anti-Aircraft Searchlight Regiment	Jan 1953 - Dec 1954
18th Air Technical Division	Mar 1951 - Aug 1953
16th Air Technical Division	Jul 1953 - Dec 1954
81st Independent Communications Company	Nov 1950 - Apr 1953

Other Units, Formed On-Site

727th Independent Communications Battalion (formed from the 81st Independent Communications Company)	Apr 1953 - Dec 1954
133rd Independent Radio-Technical Battalion	Apr 1953 - Dec 1954
61st Independent Radio-Technical Company	Apr 1953 - Dec 1954
1406th Mobile Field Hospital for Infectious Diseases	Apr 1953 - Dec 1954

the war with one division at the beginning of 1952 and by the end of the same year they brought in another two divisions In all, Korean and Chinese aviation completed 22,300 flights, fought 366 aerial battles, and shot down 271 enemy aircraft Their losses were 126 fliers and 231 aircraft [2]

The burden on units and formations of the 64th Corps was significantly greater In total, they completed 63,229 combat flights* (60,450 day and 2,779 night), participated in 1,790 aerial battles (1,683 day and 107 night), shot down 1,309 enemy aircraft, including 1,097 (1,067 day and 30 night) by fighter aviation and 212 aircraft by anti-aircraft artillery Corps losses for the period from 25 June 1950 to 27 July 1953 (i e , including the losses carried by our units before the formation of the Corps) were 120 fliers and 335 aircraft [3] Thus, the overall loss ratio was approximately 4 1 in our favor

As a result of the aerial battles [two words blacked out], 262 American aviators were captured, including the Commander of the 531st Air Wing - Colonel Arnold, the Commander of the 4th Fighter Air Group - Colonel Mahurin, the commanders of the 51st, 58th and 33rd Air Groups - Lieutenant Colonels Heller, Witt, Major Richardson, and others

The intensity of combat operations varied for different periods of the war

Up to June 1951, due to the limited network of airfields near the Chinese-Korean border and in connection with the Corps formations' mission to train Chinese and Korean aviators to conduct combat operations, only a portion of Corps forces were used, which consisted of approximately two regiments numbering up to 60 combat-ready crews Only from June 1951, after the Myaogou airfield was put into operation, did the opportunity present itself to increase the mustered forces up to five regiments (120-150 combat-ready crews) However, even after this, Soviet aviation was forced to operate at maximum tasking since the Chinese air forces, due to the low level of readiness, practically did not conduct combat operations

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* It is indicated in several documents that 64,300 flights were conducted

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[footnote 3 is possibly cut off]

and American air activity was great (in November 1951 our radio-technical capabilities registered 9,700 enemy flights north of the Pyongyang-Genza line) At the end of 1951/ beginning of 1952 our aviation on a monthly average conducted up to 2,400 combat flights (25 per combat-ready crew), and in November 1951 Corps aviators completed 3,500 flights (35 per single aviator)

Right up to the end of 1951, the American air force's main strike force was bomber aviation (B-29 and B-26 aircraft) In this connection, the main efforts of the Corps were directed at combating the bombers From that point on, the enemy's main strike force was ground attack aviation and, accordingly, the main efforts of the Fighter Corps were directed against it Simultaneously, combat was waged on enemy fighters which provided cover for bomber and ground attack aircraft operations

From November 1950 to January 1952, Corps formations conducted 19,203 combat flights, during which 564 enemy aircraft were shot down Corps losses for this period were 34 aviators and 71 aircraft The general correlation of losses was 7 9 1 in our favor

Carrying the heavy losses in bomber, ground attack and fighter aviation, the enemy was forced at the beginning of 1952 to hurriedly reexamine the combat use of its air forces, to move to new tactical procedures and to reinforce fighter groups by rearming from the F-80 aircraft to the F-86, since the F-80 and F-84 yielded to the Soviet MiG-15 (MiG-15 bis) aircraft

In response, Soviet aviators also took measures They began to conduct combat operations, chiefly with small groups (a flight or squadron), in echelon at altitudes of 8 to 14 thousand meters This allowed the use of significantly smaller forces to connect a greater number of fighters in a "screen" along a wide front

In total for 1952, Corps fighters conducted 862 daytime group battles and shot down 379 enemy aircraft, and 32 single nighttime battles and shot down 15 aircraft Their losses were 51 aviators and 172 aircraft

At the beginning of 1953, the American command decided to activate nighttime bomber aviation operations on key installations and lines of communication north of the line Ansyu-Kanko and thus [line cut off]

Accordingly, so did Soviet aviation operational activity grow By January of 1953, seven American B-29 strategic bombers had been shot down From that point on, [B-29s] were only used under adverse weather conditions For the 12 months of 1952, aviation of the 64th Corps conducted 23,539 daytime flights, i e 1,961 flights on average per month, but, for the 7 months of 1953, 18,152 flights (2,600 per month) and 508 aerial battles were conducted with the participation of 3,713 crews and in which 126 enemy aircraft were shot down in daytime battles and 13 in nighttime battles

Naturally, maintenance for the active combat operations of the Soviet aviation required considerable material outlays Thus, the 18th Air Technical Division, from June 1951 through September 1953, supplied 95,505 flights, for which it had to receive and unload at division and regimental storehouses 146,622 tons of petroleum, oils and lubricants, 4,094 wagons of air technical supplies, and 220 wagons of arms and ammunition

Soviet artillerymen, searchlight operators, communications specialists, radar station operators and the entire personnel of the Corps also completed an enormous amount of work But all the same, pilots played the main role Many of them proved themselves to be true aces in the sky over Korea Pilot N V Sutyagin shot down 22 enemy aircraft, E G Pepelyaev and L K Shchukin shot down 15 each, D P Os'kin - 14, A P Smorchkov - 12, S M Kramarenko, D A Samojlov and G U Okhaj each shot down 10 aircraft

For the Corps successfully completing the government mission, 3,504 persons were awarded medals and decorations by directive from the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Thirty-five pilots were awarded the highest governmental award "Hero of the Soviet Union" In a sign expressing the special gratitude of the Chinese people and armed forces for the assistance rendered them, the Ministry of Defense of the People's Republic of China awarded the Corps the Red Banner, and all personnel with medals and valuable gifts

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